



Annapolis Education Commission

April 26, 2023; 6:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

1. Chair Norman called the meeting to order at 6:09 PM.

2. The following members were present on roll call: Chair Norman, Vice-Chair Booth, Commissioners Carr, Collision-Lee, Ochs, non-voting member Bukowski.

The following members were absent on roll call: Commissioners Weaver (excused), Mackall, Pachler (excused), Ellis (joined in session), Matthews, Ald Finlayson.

Guest: Baron Jamaal

3. At roll call, there was not a quorum present. Minutes were not considered for approval due to lack of quorum.

4. At roll call, there was not a quorum present. Agenda was not considered for approval due to lack of quorum.

Announcement: Mary Kay Connerton, faculty member at Annapolis High School, was awarded the honor of 2023 Anne Arundel County Public Schools Teacher of the Year. A press release detailing Ms. Connerton's many achievements can be viewed at

<https://aacpsschools.org>2023/04/19>

5. There was no public testimony.

6. Advocacy to County Council for BOE Budgets

Chair Norman urged all listeners to speak at the Budget Hearings to convince the County Council to fully fund the AACPS-presented budget in order to meet needs in our schools. Although speakers are limited to two minutes, Chair Norman indicated that the power of words, regardless of time limits, is impactful. As an example, she introduced a short two minute video of a parent in Florida testifying before Martin County School Board against a ban on books in the school curriculum.

Importance of being a voice before County Council:

- Dr. Bedell has set an ambitious agenda and a robust budget in order to close the opportunity/achievement gaps for our students.
- Also presenting budgetary concerns are our constituent agencies (parks/recs, fire, police, library, etc.)
- In our cluster, Annapolis HS has 58% students on the record as FARMS, but only one social worker on staff for over 2000 students. The Superintendent has three additional social worker positions in the budget for AACPS. Social Workers at our schools are essential in not only setting students and families up with appropriate resources, but also in integrating conflict resolution/restorative justice networks to assist students in learning how to resolve and work through conflict in a positive manner.

Dates of budget hearings:

May 11, 7PM at the Arundel Center Council Chambers

May 18, 7PM at Crofton High School Auditorium.

Ability to submit comments online as well

7. Opportunities for Annapolis HS Students

- AACC will be coming to the high school , May 5, during the school day. Faculty members from 20 departments will present information covering 100 career paths.
- At AACC, April 29 from 9-11 AM, a Construction Skilled Trades Career Day will be held. This event is being sponsored by ACE Mentor Program.
- Alderwoman Finlayson, representing the Annapolis City Council, held a jobs/trades training-information day at the high school in mid-April.
- Also from the City of Annapolis, the “No Harm” Group, presented a conflict resolution workshop.

Chair Norman spoke about the difficult week that the Annapolis High Community had experienced with a student lost to suicide. With family permission, administration from AHS sent out a text and website letter regarding the student, Charlie Trapp. Counselors and Administrative Team were available to provide supports for students.

8. Volunteer Background Verification for AACPS and non-profit partners

- Seeds4Success, Charting Careers, STAIR all use volunteers through the school year and summer. Background checks are necessary for the volunteers of these non-profits and will be performed by the non-profit agency. If the non-profits hold events in AACPS schools/facilities, then a background check must also be performed by AACPS.
- Any volunteers who wish to offer assistance to schools must have a background check performed by AACPS, and are responsible for fees associated with the process.
- Eastport ES will have vouchers to help with the expenses for the background checks for low income families.
- The Commission will be sending out information for verifying background checks.

9. Transportation Policy Review

- Currently, the policy is that students in K receive bus service if living more than .5 mile from the school, students in grades 1-5 living more than a mile away, students in middle school living more than a mile and a half away. It has been noted that during inclement weather, there are fewer students, who walk to school, in attendance.
- The MSDE Report Card rates school districts for chronic absenteeism. The Annapolis cluster has a much higher rate than suburban schools for many reasons including transportation issues.
- Commissioner Pachler requested that the Board of Education modify the policy regarding student accessing busses to be transported to school. In response to a letter sent to Dr. Tobin, BoE president, by Chair Norman, to accept Commissioner Pachler's request for policy change, Dr. Tobin listed the steps to be taken. The Annapolis Education Commission will make a formal request to the Policy Committee that a review be set for a policy change to reduce the required radius for students to be eligible for bus transportation.
- Almost every cluster school has reducing absenteeism as part of the school improvement plan. The Opportunity Gap commission has identified transportation as a barrier to attendance in schools.
- Discussion as to sufficiency of busses and drivers for schools. Volume and capacity issues to be explored.

9. Discussion Status

- Sponsored events and programs
 - Be Present Initiative: Mr. Jamaal has scheduled meetings at Mt. Moriah Church on the last Monday of the month at 6PM to recruit volunteers and is stressing parent/guardian/life connections presence. He and Bishop Coates from Odenton will be meeting with Dr. Shawn Ashworth, AACPS, to discuss the program in general. Some questions regarding how volunteers are to engage with students in the hallway or violating school policies who should be in the classroom and the subsequent volunteer engagement with the administration. Volunteers are not looking to take on the roles of teacher or counselor. They want to be a presence in the hallway but need to understand from the school system how that should be manifested. Discussion regarding "privacy" issues and the idea that the volunteers should not be disconnected from the students/families/communities.
- Awards and Events

Vice-Chair Laura Booth was awarded "Volunteer of the Month" at the April Board of Ed meeting.

Commissioner Odessa Ellis was honored by Annapolis High School Black History Club.
- Needs:

SEEDS4SUCCESS: Volunteer tutors are needed for K-5th grade Wednesdays 4-6 at Eastport Elementary. Refer to website SEEDS4SUCCESS.org

10. Unfinished Business

- Regarding inviting new Annapolis City Recreation and Parks Director to speak: Director of Annapolis Recreation and Parks attended the commission meeting of March 29, 2023. At that time, she had held her position for about a week. When she has had an opportunity to spend more time at her new position, the Commission will extend an invitation.

11. New Business

- Discussion regarding partnership with AACC to allow students who are enrolled seniors in high school courses for free. In addition, entrepreneurship courses are held at Annapolis High and are taught by AACC faculty. Question as to whether or not courses are offered free at AACC to students who have finished high school.
- A charter school proposal workshop was presented to the Annapolis City Council. No other information available at this time. More information to come.
- Information was shared indicating that Dr. Richard Rogers, principal of Walter S. Mills-Parole ES is to be transferred to a position at the Board of Education.

There being no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 7:18PM. The next meeting will be held Wednesday May 31, 2023.

Submitted by,
Pamela Bukowski